

# CCBS – LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

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6 July 2018 – 13 July 2018



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

The Northern Ireland Assembly was dissolved at 00:01 on Thursday 26 January 2017.



Thursday 12 July 2018

Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Martin Kenny asked the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine the preparatory work that has been done on the way in which the trade of livestock across the Border will work in the event of a no-deal Brexit; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

**Michael Creed:** Brexit has the potential to have a very significant impact on the agri-food sector throughout Ireland, including livestock trade along the border region.

As the Deputy will be aware, the agri-food sector, including the livestock sector, is of critical importance to the Irish economy, and its regional spread means it underpins the socio-economic development of rural Ireland.

The primary means through which the Government is seeking to minimise the impact of Brexit in a border context is through a negotiated outcome which permits cross-border trade to continue without impediment. In this regard, the UK commitment, in the Joint EU-UK Report of last December, to avoid a hard border on the island of Ireland, was extremely important.

Ensuring that the UK gives effect to this commitment is now a significant focus of the Irish Government, and we have the full support of our EU partners and of the European Commission Task Force in this regard. The so-called 'backstop' text that the EU has proposed in the draft Withdrawal Agreement provides certainty that in any circumstances, and no matter what the outcome of the negotiations on the future relationship between the EU and UK, there will be no hard border on the island of Ireland. Our preference is still for an overall EU-UK relationship which would resolve all issues, but it remains essential that a backstop is agreed which provides such certainty.

Live exports are, of course, an important component of Ireland's livestock industry. I am conscious of the vital role they play in stimulating price competition, and providing an alternative market outlet for farmers.

It is useful also to point out that movement of cattle between EU Member States is itself subject to a number of conditions. Animals must be properly identified, undergo a veterinary inspection, be fit to travel, and be accompanied by an Intra-Community Trade Animal Health Certificate (ITAHC), issued under the EU TRACES system by my Department. Cattle are usually exported from approved assembly centres and must complete a 30-day residency period on a holding (this does not apply to cattle for slaughter) and a TB test prior to export.

I wish to assure the Deputy that the Government remains very focused on supporting farmers and the agri-food industry through the challenges ahead. It will be firm in arguing that any agreement reached between the EU and the UK must take account of the very serious challenges presented by Brexit for the sector, particularly given the unique circumstances on the island of Ireland and the importance of our economic relationship with the UK. And of course ultimately Ireland's objective in the negotiations is to have a trading relationship with the UK which is as close as possible to the current arrangement.

**Source** <https://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2018-07-12a.102&s=cross-border+2018-07-06..2018-07-13#g104.r>

**Thursday 12 July 2018**

**Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment**

Brendan Smith asked the Minister for Communications, Climate Action and Environment if he will request that all procurement related activities be halted pending determination in both cases in view of the recent incinerator decision in Northern Ireland and the impending judicial review of the North-South Interconnector and the Supreme Court appeal; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

**Denis Naughten:** There are a number of legal issues ongoing in Ireland and Northern Ireland in relation to the North South Interconnector project. My Department was involved in a High Court appeal against the planning decision in 2017. The planning decision was upheld in the High Court and subsequently in the Court of Appeal. This is now being appealed to the Supreme Court.

The legal issues in Northern Ireland are ultimately a matter for the authorities there. The judgement made by the Court of Appeal in Northern Ireland on 6 July relates to a different project, although it has been acknowledged that it could have wider implications for decision making in Northern Ireland. It is to be expected that the judgement will be studied over the coming weeks by authorities on both sides of the border for any implications for the North South Interconnector project.

I respect the process of the courts system in both Ireland and Northern Ireland and it is important to let these processes reach their appropriate conclusions.

The Interconnector, as proposed as an overhead line, has full planning permission in Ireland and Northern Ireland. The construction of the project, and all related procurement activities, is an operational matter for EirGrid and ESB Networks and one in which I have no function.

Source: <https://www.kildarestreet.com/wrans/?id=2018-07-12a.1704&s=North+south++2018-07-06..2018-07-13#g1706.q>